

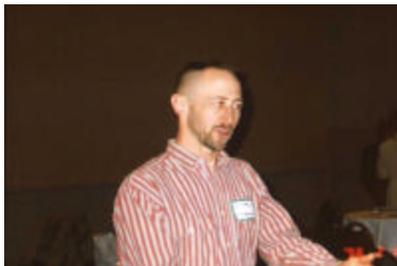
NOGLSTP *Bulletin*

Spring 1998

National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals Inc.
NOGLSTP PO Box 91803, Pasadena CA 91104 phone/fax: 626 791-7689

OUT AND ABOUT WITH NOGLSTP

NOGLSTP members, friends, and supporters convened for a reception and social at the Pennsylvania Convention Center, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science over Valentine's Day weekend. About 25 people came to the reception, including a contingent from Triangle Area Gay Scientists (TAGS), and the Humboldt Society, Philadelphia's gay and lesbian natural history organization. Many people stopped by to say hello on their way to a simultaneously scheduled reception for The Association for Women in Science. Barbara Belmont presented a short history of NOGLSTP, and introduced NOGLSTP Board Member Mark Tumeo and NOGLSTP Web Master Arthur Lloyd to the audience.



Mike LuFurno (left photo), Program Coordinator of the Humboldt society, presented a colorful and informative slide show on the natural history of the Philadelphia area. The event was

followed by a walk to a local pub for a delicious dinner and much socializing.

Gay and lesbian biologists (and their companions) from across the country met for dinner at the Fly Trap in San Francisco April 18th. The convention that drew them together was the annual Experimental Biology meeting. Dinner conversation was lively and intense, as each attendee shared and compared their expertise in neuroanatomy, physiology, immunology, and veterinary science. Nine people in all were there to enjoy the evening.



NOGLSTP Webmaster Arthur Lloyd chats with AAAS attendees.



Experimental Biologists in San Francisco. Rochelle Diamond, NOGLSTP Chair, is second from left.

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CHEMISTS MEET UP IN DALLAS

The newly and informally formed LGB-Allies Chemists group met twice for meals together at the Spring National American Chemical Society in Dallas. Originally an unmoderated mailing list for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered chemists and their allies, this group is seriously considering chartering itself as a committee within the American Chemical Society. Advantages to being an official ACS Committee would be broad visibility via ACS publications, and the opportunity to apply for funding for member retention projects. No doubt, the queer chemists and their supporters will meet at the Fall National ACS Meeting in Boston. To stay in touch with activities, join their unmoderated email list: toba@psu.edu to subscribe; lgbchem@bragg.bmb.psu.edu to post

BEWARE OF LEAKY CONDOMS

A recent *Los Angeles Times* story reported that a local condom importer was sentenced to federal prison for trying to bribe a Food and Drug Administration official to cover up his distribution of hundreds of thousands of defective condoms. The condoms were manufactured in Malaysia by Dongkuk Techco Rubber Industries, and were sold under the brand names of Pamitex, Maxi, Black Jack, Magic, and Ginza. Nearly half a million of the condoms were shipped to stores in California, Florida, Michigan, New York, Rhode Island, Tennessee and Texas, without FDA clearance. When samples of the shipment were tested, FDA inspectors discovered that the condoms leaked. Informed of the results, the importer offered a \$2000 bribe to the FDA official to cover up the fact that he already had distributed many of the condoms and to allow him to sell the rest of them.

How does the FDA decide whether a condom shipment is safe to distribute? Statistical sampling and pinhole leak testing. A typical import shipment of condoms is about one million. Customs officials automatically detain imported shipments of condoms (and latex gloves) until they are proven to be free of pinhole leaks. The importer contracts with an independent inspection agency or laboratory to randomly sample about 3000 condoms from the shipment. Then, employing what's called a multiple sampling plan, groups of about 300 condoms are tested for pinhole leaks. Essentially, this entails fastening the open end of the condom to a filler tube. A specific volume of water is dumped into the condom through the filler tube. The business end of the condom is then inspected for pinhole leaks, evidenced by the dripping, drizzling, or spraying of water. If none of the condoms in the first round of tests leak, then the entire shipment is accepted with no further testing. If more than 8 (or so) condoms leak, then the entire shipment is rejected. If the leak count is in between these accept and reject levels, then the next round of condoms must be tested. And so on, until an unambiguous accept or reject decision can be made or all of the condoms have been tested. The actual numbers tested and accept/reject levels vary with the size of the lot, and are spelled out by the Food and Drug Administration in the Code of Federal Regulations. The FDA reviews the pinhole leak test results before allowing a shipment of condoms to be release for sale. Except in the case of flagrant scoff-laws, this certification procedure helps assure public health and safety when it come to condom use. Now aren't you glad you know how safe safe sex can be?

The March 1998 issue of *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science* featured a paper entitled "Comparison of the auditory systems of heterosexuals and homosexuals: Click-evoked otoacoustic emissions." Click-evoked otoacoustic emissions (CEOAEs) are echo-like wave forms that are emitted by components of the inner ear in response to a brief transient sound. Previous research has showed that CEOAEs from females are stronger than males, and CEOAEs from right ears are stronger than from left ears. Previous research has also showed that females from opposite sex twin pairs have CEOAEs more like those of males than females. This previous research suggested that there might be a relationship between auditory system development and androgen levels during prenatal development. In this paper, the study measured the CEOAEs waveform and amplitude of 237 recruited heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual men and women in their early 20's. The authors reported that the CEOAEs of homosexual females were different than those of heterosexual females, and that the nature of the difference is consistent with the idea that homosexual females are exposed to higher levels of androgens prenatally than are heterosexual females. No difference in CEOAEs was observed between homosexual and heterosexual males. The authors speculate that if there is an androgen-link to the prenatal development of the auditory system, then female-female twin pairs would exhibit the strongest CEOAEs, and male-male twin pairs the weakest. The research to prove or disprove this hypothesis has not yet been performed. Reprint requests for the paper should be made to Dennis McFadden, Department of Psychology, University of Texas, Austin TX 78712. email: mcfadden@psy.utexas.edu

There was much discussion on the NOGLSTP email list about whether scientists are helping or hindering queers by researching biological origins of sexual orientation. The conventional wisdom seems to be that such research is interesting for the sake of finding out the truth, but the potential use or misuse of the information is what is bothersome. NOGLSTP advocates scientific responsibility as well as scientific freedom.

NOTED ECOLOGIST COMES OUT AS TRANSEXUAL

Noted ecologist Dr. Jonathan Roughgarden, Professor of Biological Sciences at Stanford University, has - at the age of 52 - come out as transsexual and has changed his name to Joan Roughgarden. Professor Roughgarden's research focuses on the relationship between evolutionary biology and ecology, and involves a combination of theoretical ecology and field studies. For more information and some great internet links to transgender issues, check out her web page at <http://lizard.stanford.edu>.

ABOUT NOGLSTP

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF GAY AND LESBIAN SCIENTISTS AND TECHNICAL PROFESSIONALS, INC., is a nation-wide organization of lesbigay scientists and technical professionals, regional and caucus groups, and others interested in technical matters and the gay and lesbian community. NOGLSTP's goals include dialog with professional organizations, providing information, improving our member's employment and professional environment, opposing homophobia and stereotypes, educating the gay, scientific and general communities, and fostering inter-city contacts among our members. National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals, Inc. is a tax-exempt educational organization under IRS section 501(c)3, incorporated in the State of California (TAX ID # 95-4358685). Membership dues are \$15-25 (sliding scale) annually for non-students. Student dues are \$10 annually. After the first \$10, dues are tax deductible. \$5 extra for memberships outside the US for the extra postage. Please, US dollars only. Written correspondence may be addressed to: NOGLSTP, PO BOX 91803, Pasadena CA 91109-9813. For more information, see our web page at <http://www.noglstp.org/>

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Newsletter

The **NOGLSTP Bulletin** is published quarterly. Articles are encouraged and gratefully received. Handwritten, typed, and magnetic (3.5" pc-FD) may be sent to the NOGLSTP office. If you have internet access, articles may be e-mailed the NOGLSTP office c/o belmont@netcom.com.

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**MARK
YOUR
CALEN-
DAR:**

20th Anniversary

**National Lesbian & Gay
Health Conference**
and the
**16th National
AIDS/HIV Forum**

July 25-29, 1998

Hyatt Regency in Embarcadero Center,
San Francisco CA

MANDATORY HIV REPORTING

The Lesbian and Gay Rights Chapter ACLU April newsletter reported that two more states have sought mandatory HIV reporting. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health will require all health-care providers to report any cases of HIV infection. A number identifier system will be used to protect patient confidentiality. The Kansas Senate is considering legislation that would eliminate HIV anonymity, requiring physicians, county health departments, and social service agencies to report names to the Department of Health and Environment. This proposed change was added to legislation funding the provision of protease inhibitors to HIV and AIDS patients who otherwise couldn't afford the drugs.

PSYCH UNIT FILLS PATIENTS WITH PRIDE

The March 23rd issue of *Nursing Spectrum* featured an article about the Pride Unit at the Carrier Foundation, a prestigious mental health care facility in Belle Mead, NJ. The Pride Unit is devoted to the care and treatment of gays and lesbians with psychological problems and chemical dependencies. Since most of its staff is gay or lesbian, all of the patients are able to feel that their treatments are being administered by those who know what they're dealing with, and that being gay or lesbian is not a failing. The Pride Unit is one of 5 such units that are part of the nationwide Pride Institute. Established over ten years ago in Massachusetts, the Pride Institute specializes in treating queer folk for depression, anxiety, chemical dependency, and AIDS-related stress and grief.

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Techno-Interest/Occupation _____

Most Recent Degree/Discipline _____

Do you want your name and address/phone/email printed on a membership roster to be released to other NOGLSTP members? NO YES

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP US WITH? (CHECK ANY THAT INTEREST YOU)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS HOLD OFFICE AAAS FUNDRAISING

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES EDIT NEWSLETTER PRODUCE NEWSLETTER

NEW PAMPHLET TOPICS GRANT WRITING

LIASON TO OTHER PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION _____